



The PaceSetter

14th National Veterans Golden Age Games

A daily production of the National Veterans Golden Age Games

Monday, September 4, 2000

Golden Age Veterans Face The Challenge of the Pentathlon

The first event of the 14th National Veterans Golden Age Games, the pentathlon, took place on Sunday afternoon in and around the Kansas Expocentre. Considered by some to be among the most physically challenging competition at the Games, the pentathlon has five components – air guns, a basketball free throw, shot-put, discus, and a softball hit. According to National Meet Director Dave Krueger, it is a popular event and the data proves it, with nearly 100 veterans registered this year.

One competitor, Alice Barszcz, 79, from Manahawkin, NJ, says it's the different challenges she enjoys most. "I don't like the basketball because I have trouble lifting my arms, but I like all the others, especially the softball hit, shot-put and discus. They're my favorites - this event is a good challenge!"

Over the years, pentathlon events have changed a little to increase the overall challenge and improve safety, with air guns replacing a 50-yard walk, and discus taking the place of a Frisbee toss. (A one-time softball toss also gave way to the shot-put event.) Now, competitors train hard for the various components and look forward to competing each year. "It's an opportunity to participate in a variety of different activities," says Krueger. "We have a number of veterans here who practice for this all year long, and it really shows off their physical prowess."

For Ed Viola, 61 of Hampton, Va., the pentathlon matches his personality and helps him satisfy his "insatiable curiosity. I'm never satis-

fied with just one item or one event," he says. "I like the variety."

Open to both ambulatory and wheelchair-using participants, no special rules or adaptive equipment are needed for wheelchair competition. One veteran who enjoys the wheelchair pentathlon is Clair "Scotty" Otis, 67, of Pentwater, Mich. Like Viola, Otis likes

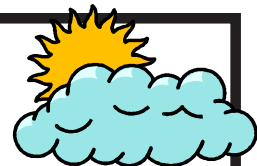
–Continued on page 2



Houston Brumit, winner of the 1999 George Gangi Most Inspirational Athlete Award announces "Let the Games Begin" during the Games Opening Ceremony on Sunday.

Weather Corner

Partly Cloudy
High: near 100 Low: mid-70's



–Continued from page 1

Today's Schedule: Monday, Sept. 4, 2000

6:30 - 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast at your hotel
8:00 - 5:15 p.m.	Alternate Activity: Abilene Day Trip
8:30 - 11:30 a.m.	Alternate Activity: Topeka Zoological Park
8:00 - 9:00 a.m. 9:00 - noon	Swimming Non-Ambulatory, All Ages Swimming Ambulatory, All Ages (Swimming events held in Washburn University Natatorium)
10:00 - noon 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Nine Ball - Wheelchair (WC), All Ages Nine Ball, Ages 65-69, 80+ Nine Ball, Ages 70-74, 75-79 Nine Ball, Ages 55-59, 60-64 (All Nine Ball matches in the Expocentre/Exhibition Hall)
11:00 - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch in the Expocentre/Sunflower Room
12:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Alternate Activity: Historic Ward-Meade Park
12:30 - 4:45 p.m.	Alternate Activity: Harrah's Prairie Band Casino
1:00 - 3:00 p.m. 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Table Tennis, Ages 55-59, 60-64 Table Tennis, Ages 65-69, 80+ Table Tennis, Ages 70-74, 75-79 (All Table Tennis matches in the Exhibition Hall)
4:30 - 6:30 p.m.	Dinner in the Expocentre/Sunflower Room
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Topeka Civic Theater's Senior Class "Laughing Matters," in Exhibition Hall

Tomorrow: Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2000

8:00 - 10:00 a.m.	Horseshoes & WC Horseshoes, Ages 65-69 (All Horseshoes in the Landon Arena)
8:00 - 10:00 a.m.	Shuffleboard and WC Shuffleboard, Ages 65-69 (All Shuffleboard in Exhibition Hall)
8:00 - 10:00 a.m.	Checkers, Ages 55-59, 70-74, (All Checkers in the Shawnee Room)

"the variety of the different events. You vary from strength in shot-put to skill in rifles, basketball and softball." While he's won bronze and silver medals in past pentathlons, Otis hoped to do at least as well this week, saying "I always shoot for the gold!"

Favorite aspects of the pentathlon vary widely among participants. Although Krueger predicted that the field events might be less popular than the others (due to difficulty finding the equipment to practice back home), not all the veterans agreed.

For example, Robert White, 69, of Baltimore, Md., says it's shot-put that's the most fun for him. "I like to try to throw it as far as I can," he said. And, while he hadn't won a medal before, he was trying for one this year "really hard."

Amalia Pellon, 59, from Bath, N.Y., is one pentathlon competitor who did win a gold medal last year. "It's a challenge to see what I can do and what I can improve in. I like the discus and softball best. Plus, it's good to show that a woman can do it *better* than a man," she said, smiling.

Air guns seems to be popular among veterans overall, possibly due to their shared military background. Bernard Gibson, 65, of Washington, D.C. was one such veteran. Now trying the pentathlon for the third time, he says it "keeps me in shape, and keeps me competitive, which I like because I'm a competitive person." Otis also listed air rifles as his favorite activity, as did Viola.

–Continued on page 4

Today's Alternate Activities

The choice is yours. Today, there are four exciting excursions that offer something for everyone. Choosing which one to go on is the hardest part.

- **The Abilene Day Trip** – This day-long trip takes you back in time. Visit the restored Union Pacific Railroad Depot and enjoy a sugar cookie made from Mamie Eisenhower's recipe, while exploring the town at the end of the Chisholm Trail. Take a guided bus tour of historic Abilene (the boyhood home of U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower), board the Abilene and Smoky Valley Railroad for a scenic ride on the rails, visit the Eisenhower Center, Presidential Museum and more.
- **The Topeka Zoological Park** – A three-hour tour that lets you get up close and personal with nearly 400 animals from around the world. Known as one of the nation's finest small zoos.
- **Historic Ward-Meade Park** – Visit this turn-of-the-century village, where pioneers crossing the Oregon Trail were fed from the Ward's log cabin. Stroll through the Potwin drugstore with its authentic soda fountain, or tour the livery stable, one-room schoolhouse and train depot. A three-hour trip.
- **Harrah's Prairie Band Casino** – Feeling lucky? Try your hand at slots, poker, blackjack, craps, roulette and bingo in this 63,000 square foot entertainment complex. A four-hour trip.



On The Menu

Lunch 11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Garden Greens with Dressing, Cole Slaw, Basil Chicken, Spaghetti with Meat & Alfredo Sauces, Italian Meatballs, Veggie Medley, Garlic Breadsticks, Desserts and Cool Beverages.

Dinner 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Mixed Greens with Dressing, Fruit Salad, Roasted Pork Loin, Cajun Grilled Chicken, Red Beans & Rice, Scallop Potatoes, Peas & Pearl Onions, Rolls & Butter, Ice Cream and Drinks.

Famous Lines

Think competing in the Games means a lot to you? Here's what some competitors had to say:

"The Games mean a lot to me because I have made so many friends who have been in combat and we understand each other ... I like the many people at the Games who make me feel like somebody."

– **Sydney Leon, Livermore, Calif.**

"The Games have inspired me and given me goals. The Games keep my spirit and morale up."

– **Amalia Pellon, Bath, N.Y.**

"Participating in the Games allows me to relive a carefree life again—not worrying about any problems, but just having fun. The camaraderie is priceless, the experience is uplifting and will last forever in my heart and memories."

– **Harold Kopp, Hobe Sound, Fla.**

"I'm very proud to have served my country. I am proud to participate in these Games in honor of the soldiers who never came back."

– **Arturo Casillas, San Bernadino, Calif.**

"I love the challenge of competing against my fellow veterans. Staying active keeps me young."

– **Joe Carter, Leavenworth, Kan.**

Word Scrambler

See if you can unscramble this word. (Many vets say it the reason they keep coming back to the Games)

DAMARECIERA

9-Ball New to Games

For the first time this year, the National Veterans Golden Age Games will offer a competition in 9-ball, a replacement for the previous 8-ball event. National officials recommended this change to offer the same type of billiards event that is offered at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games and other national competitions. It is predicted that the new competition will progress more quickly, while offering even more of a challenge to competitors.

The object of 8-ball is to sink the 8-ball at the end of the game, with 15 balls on the table to start. With 9-ball, there are only nine balls. The game is played with the cue ball and lowest numbered balls, 1-9. Balls must be hit in numeric order or rotation, and the player who pockets the 9-ball with a legal hit any time, wins the game. Players do not need to call their shots to a pocket, including the 9-ball. Some say that 9-ball takes even more skill than 8-ball, because you have to always be on top of the rules and aware of your opponent's fouls – not only counting but announcing when a foul occurs.

Officials have printed up the new rules and gotten them out to the participants, and they will also be doing some demonstrations to help make everyone more aware of the new game.



Medical Assistance

Medical assistance is available at both hotels. If you would like to speak with someone about an existing or recent health concern, don't hesitate to call or stop by the medical room in either hotel. At the Ramada Inn Hotel, the medical room is located in room 833. To call, dial #7 and then 833 from any hotel (house) phone. At the Capitol Plaza Hotel, the medical room is on the second floor in room 203. To call, dial #7 and then 203 on any house phone.

–Continued from page 2

But Carole Atkinson, 63, of Deptford, N.J., tried the event on Sunday for her own special reason. Having recently undergone surgery on her arm, she wanted to see how well she would do post-procedure. "And I thought this would be one good way to find out," she said.

Another newcomer, Marilyn Miller from Covina, Calif., entered the event – and the Games – for the first time this week. For Miller, the goal is simple. "I just want to get through this event without embarrassing myself," she said. *(Now I can certainly relate to that can you?)*

– By Kim Byers

VHA Special Events Coordinator

Attention Athletes

There was a mix-up with the event schedule. Do not use the computer-generated event schedule provided during registration. It is not accurate. Instead, use the event schedule found in your ID packets.

Medal Presentations - Find out who wins the gold medal in each event at the nightly award ceremony being held in the Expocentre, Shawnee Room, from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Senior Class Brings on the Laughs

Tonight's entertainment, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., in Exhibition Hall, features the Topeka Civic Theater's Senior Class performing "Laughing Matters." The Senior Class has been delighting Kansas Audiences for three years with their original brand of improv comedy.

The Class, made up of members 50 years of age and older, takes to the stage without the benefit of costumes, scripts or props. Cueing off suggestions from the audience, the Senior Class creates original material that's bound to please. If you enjoy a good laugh, you'll love the Topeka Civic Theater's Senior Class!